

In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Volume 1, Issue 24, December 6, 2002

Inside this issue:

Message from the Mayor	1
Adrian Thompson Appointed Acting Fire Chief	2
Employee Profile	2
District Releases Safe Passages Report	3
Home Again Initiative Gets Moving	3
National Ballistics Database	4
District Activities	4
Community News	5
Upcoming Events	5

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John A. Wilson Building
1350 Penn. Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: (202) 727-2980
Fax: (202) 727-6561
www.washingtondc.gov

Message from the Mayor

As many of you know, there has been much talk recently about the difficulties experienced by Greater Southeast Community Hospital. Greater Southeast Hospital is part of the District's Health Care Alliance, but only one part. An entire network of other hospitals in our area has provided quality service under the alliance, and this network of hospitals continues to do so. I was very pleased to announce on November 26 that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provided critical financial assistance to Greater Southeast Hospital. CMS Administrator Tom Scully made the announcement, following a tour of the hospital with Councilmembers Sandy Allen and Kevin Chavous, DC Health Department Director James Buford, Greater Southeast Hospital CEO Karen Dale, and myself.

CMS, the federal agency that administers the Medicare program, agreed to accelerate the payment of Medicare claims that Greater Southeast has filed and will file with its fiscal intermediary, which should improve cash flow to the hospital. CMS also will expedite the payment of about \$3 million in outstanding Medicare claims to the hospital to provide immediate cash infusion to the hospital; and, it will suspend the monthly collection of Greater Southeast's federal debt payments for one year. Suspending those payments, which amount to \$82,000 per month, should free up close to \$1 million in annual cash flow for the hospital.

Greater Southeast is a strong partner and a major employer in our region, and we are doing all that we can to get the hospital and its employees through this financial difficulty. The assistance from the federal government is a blessing that allows the hospital to do the things it needs to do to move through this crisis.

No matter what happens with Greater Southeast Hospital, the citizens of the District have my commitment that residents of this community will not go without quality health care (or continued access to full service hospitals). I will continue to conduct an ongoing dialogue with citizens to make sure correct information is out there and residents' concerns are heard.

The Healthcare Alliance has 6 hospitals, more than 30 clinics, and hundreds of individual healthcare practitioners in its system. They are all-in effect-under contract with the District to provide services to roughly 28,000 District residents who have enrolled in the program.

Individuals enrolled in the program have health benefits equivalent to and, in some cases, superior to what they might have from a private or public sector employer. They have full hospitalization coverage. They have preventative care, access to specialists, dental coverage, and prescription drug coverage. They have a choice of providers, in most cases, and a network spread across the District delivering this service. No one hospital or one provider is essential to the operation. We have been able to attract several hospitals and dozens of clinics because the program has worked well and is financially solvent.

The Healthcare Alliance is not experiencing financial pressures. The alliance is fully funded and no District monies are "at risk." We are providing full and complete coverage to the enrollees, and we will continue to do so regardless of the outcome of the financial problems currently facing Greater Southeast Community Hospital and Doctors Community Healthcare.



AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

[Advisory Neighborhood Commissions](#)

Adrian Thompson Appointed Acting Fire Chief

Only a few short weeks ago, I announced to our city government and to citizens that I have appointed Adrian Thompson as Acting Chief of the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS). Chief Thompson has served as the interim DC Fire/EMS Chief since June.

Chief Thompson is a District native and a 32-year veteran of the DC Fire/EMS Department. He began his career in 1970 and rose through the ranks from firefighter to sergeant in 1980, to lieutenant in 1983, to captain in 1993, to Battalion Fire Chief in 1995, and to Deputy Chief in 1999. He also served as Assistant Director of the Physical Capability Testing Program in 1988-1989.

In April 2001, then-Chief Ronnie Few appointed Chief Thompson to the post of Assistant Chief of Operations. In that capacity, Chief Thompson was responsible for fire suppression, support services, and general oversight of all operations.

After a nationwide search, I made the determination last month that Chief Thompson is the best person for the job of DC Fire/EMS Chief. He did a terrific job as interim chief since June; and he is a dedicated, capable, and loyal leader in the department who has served this city well for more than three decades.

While there has been much progress in the department in recent years, there are many significant challenges still ahead. Chief Thompson is the right person to continue to move the department forward.

Chief Thompson told us "it was an honor to be chosen to serve the citizens of the District of Columbia in this new capacity." Among his top priorities, Chief Thompson identified training needs for front line employees and managers, continuing improvements in the response time for advanced life support, fire prevention programs, and special operations.

Chief Thompson's appointment is subject to DC Council confirmation.



Acting Chief Adrian Thompson

Employee Profile Angela Williams

Currently a Child Support Enforcement Specialist in the Enforcement Unit of the Office of the Corporation Counsel's Child Support Enforcement Division, Angela Williams has served the children of the District of Columbia in various capacities within the division for over ten years. Angela's high level of service was recently brought to my attention in a letter of thanks from a constituent she helped.

The mother of two children had suddenly stopped receiving her court-ordered child support. Angela investigated the problem, making more than a dozen calls to the father's employer and to government agencies. She found that the children's father had left his employment and was receiving disability insurance payments. Angela redirected the wage withholding order to the proper authorities who immediately began withholding the payments and directing those payments for disbursement to the mother. When the payments suddenly ended again, Angela aggressively pursued the issue and helped the responsible agency realize it had a system glitch in its processing of child support payments, which caused them not to be issued. The mother has received the missed payments and now receives current child support payments under the wage withholding order.

Angela Williams' dedication to our citizens exemplifies the spirit of customer service, and we thank her for a job well done. Angela lives in the Deanwood neighborhood of the District.



Angela Williams



District Releases *Safe Passages 2002: How are the Children?*

On November 20, the District released *Safe Passages 2002: How Are the Children?*, the initial report on the District of Columbia's 2000 Safe Passages Action Plan for Children and Youth. The release of the report marks the first time that the District of Columbia has produced a collaborative, multi-disciplinary "report card" on the status of its children and youth. The document includes assessments and rankings on how we are doing.

In 1999, my administration conducted a comprehensive review of services to children and youth in the District. Using the review, we garnered the ability to assess what we are doing right and what more needs to be done to help our children and youth. The 1999 review culminated in creating Safe Passages, an action plan launched in the year 2000 to develop system-wide, comprehensive, and coordinated services to children. The action plan would serve as a road map in childrens' passage from birth to adolescence and adulthood.

The release of this report marks the beginning of an annual look at our successes and our progress in serving our city's young people. It also marks a frank and honest look at what we can do better to help our citizens.

While there are notable successes—namely in services to very young children and the creation of new initiatives—there is much work to be done in youth development and in assisting young people to make a strong transition to adulthood.

Our most problematic area is service to youth. The District's youth far exceed national averages in all measures of sexual activity—with a teen birth rate that is nearly twice the national average. That is just a statistic, but it's one that presents difficulties and hurdles for our young people. There is also a tremendous need to increase the number of substance abuse treatment slots and to continue improvements in our juvenile justice system.

In the end, this kind of information is critical as we face difficult fiscal decisions. It will enable us to allocate funds to targeted areas and work toward further improvement in the years to come. Together, we are working tirelessly to become "One City, One Future"—a city that lives up to the hopes and dreams of its citizens.

Home Again Initiative Gets Moving

Last spring, we launched the *Home Again Initiative* in an effort to revitalize neighborhoods. Two weeks ago, I announced the project's first six developers who will purchase and renovate 45 vacant and abandoned properties and help families move into them within the next year. These 45 properties are located in Shaw, Petworth, Trinidad, Kingman Park, Deanwood, Anacostia, and Congress Heights.

Matt Wallach and Sarah Constant of Mission First were selected to renovate five properties in Petworth, Lincoln Park, and Kingman Park. Mission First has worked with non-profits to preserve more than a thousand units of affordable housing.

Michelle Owens of Non-Profit Community Development Corporation (NPCDC) was selected to renovate five properties in Petworth, Chillum, and Trinidad. NPCDC has overseen the development and management of affordable housing projects, homeless shelters, and transitional housing throughout the Washington area.

Aaron Ruderman of Motir/Stellar Home Builders was selected to renovate five properties in Trinidad and Petworth. Motir/Stellar is a local, small, disadvantaged business that has renovated homes across the District and Maryland.

We selected Loretta Tate of Marshall Heights Community Development Organization to renovate 10 properties in Petworth, Deanwood, Fort Dupont Park, Randall Heights, and Woodridge. Marshall Heights Community Development Organization has been working hard in Ward 7 for more than 20 years.

Mike Huke, Kevin O'Malley, and Gene Edgecombe of CIH/VMS Restorations, LLC were selected to rehab 10 properties in Petworth, Randall Heights, Congress Heights, and Anacostia. CIH has produced over 3,200 units of housing for low- and moderate-income families in the Washington area.

In addition, we awarded Dean Harrison and Merrick Malone of Harrison-Malone Development six properties in the Shaw and Petworth neighborhoods. The principles have been involved with two large HOPE VI projects—Wheeler Creek and East Capitol—and renovated more than 60 homes and numerous apartments across the city.



National Gun Ballistics Database

The recent sniper attacks brought renewed attention to the creation of a National Gun Ballistics Database. On November 1, I joined Councilmembers Kathy Patterson and Adrian Fenty and Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan to express support for the establishment of this national registry.

Establishing this national registry would be a powerful law enforcement tool. For example, when a gun is used in a crime, investigators would be able to determine if the gun was linked to other crimes.

In 2001, the US House of Representatives considered the Gun Ballistics Safety Act of 2001, which would apply to newly manufactured firearms. The US Senate in 2000 considered the Ballistic Fingerprints Act of 2000, which would establish a databank of shell casings from the manufacturer for all handguns. The state of Maryland, through the Responsible Gun Safety Act of 2000, created the Integrated Ballistic Identification System, which scans, stores, and retrieves firearms ballistics data. The state of New York requires ballistic fingerprinting of all handguns shipped into the state after March 1, 2001. Currently pending in Massachusetts is legislation, An Act to Further Reduce Gun Violence in the Commonwealth, which would establish an electronic ballistic database.

There is no easy way to keep guns from coming into our city. However, we can do more to successfully prosecute people who use guns to commit crimes in the District. When it is fired, each gun leaves unique marks on the bullet and shell—its fingerprint. To create a database of ballistic fingerprints, gun manufacturers would need to fire each gun as it comes off the assembly line so that the ballistic fingerprint can be created and linked with the gun's serial number.

A National Gun Ballistics Database would enable regional law enforcement to work from the same database. It would certainly increase the likelihood of solving cases like the recent sniper attacks.

District Activities



Mayor Williams, Councilmembers Sandy Allen and Kevin Chavous, and Jim Buford, Acting Director of the DC Department of Health, toured Greater Southeast Community Hospital on November 26.



Mayor Williams had his hands full during a turkey give-away for District families in need on Thanksgiving. Receiving a gift were Mary Chaney; her mother Mattie Madison; and her children, Ronald and Tamera.



Mayor Williams cuts the ribbon commemorating the completion of the redevelopment of Faircliff Plaza East in Columbia Heights.



Mayor Williams and Councilmember Adrian Fenty celebrate the third night of Chanukah with students from the Jewish Primary Day School and Susan Koss, the head of the school.



Community News

- [District Receives Award from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid](#)
- [District Launches College Savings Plan](#)
- [Mayor Williams Presents "Party Animal" to Chief Moose](#)

[Click here](#) to view news releases.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 12/09 | DMV Community Education Seminar
7 pm
St. Timothy Episcopal Church
3601 Alabama Avenue, SE |
| 12/09 | 18th Annual Mayor's Arts Awards
7:30 pm
Lincoln Theatre
1215 U Street, NW |
| 12/10 | DMV Community Education Seminar
7 pm
Isle of Patmos Church
12th Street and Rhode Island Avenue, NE |
| 12/16 | Holiday Party and Children's Gift Drive
6 pm
Badlands
1415 22nd Street, NW |
| 12/19 | Annual Senior Citizens Holiday Party
11 am
DC Armory
2001 East Capitol Street
Call (202) 724-5622 to reserve tickets |

[Click here](#) to view the Mayor's daily schedule.

